

REMARKS

Introduction

Claims 1, 5 and 8-18 are pending in this application, of which claims 11-13 have been withdrawn. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended to correct informalities in claim language and to more clearly define the present subject matter. Since neither a new consideration nor a new issue requiring a new search has been introduced, entry of this amendment is respectfully solicited.

Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 5, 8, 10 and 14-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over R &D Kobe Steel Technical Report (“Publication 1”) in view of Hiroshi Suzuki, ed., Plastic Processing (“Publication 2”) and further in view of the computer-generated English translation of Japanese Patent 2003-213372 (“JP ‘372”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed steel wire of high Si content (1.80-2.70%) and low Mn content (0.1-0.7%), which further includes Co: 0.02-1.00% and also V: 0.05-0.50%, as set forth in Claim 1, would not have been obvious over the cited prior art.

The Examiner asserts that JP-372 discloses a steel composition containing Si: 1.0-3.0% and Mn: 0.5-1.5% which discloses a steel wire including high Si content and low Mn content. However, JP-372 merely discloses the Si and Mn contents in a wide numerical range and JP-372 does not disclose or even suggest that claimed range of Si and Mn contents are preferable. In contrast, in the present subject matter, the higher Si content of 1.80-2.70% together with lower Mn content of 0.1-0.7% is critical to the properties of the steel wire, such as the reduction of area after quenching-tempering and the shear yield stress (see, Tables in the specification).

Furthermore, none of the cited references disclose or even suggest that a steel wire with high Si and low Mn contents further includes Co: 0.02-1.00% and V: 0.05-0.5%. Applicants also submit that it would not have been obvious to combine the cited references because there is simply no motivation or suggestion to do so.

Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that none of the cited references, taken alone or in any combination thereof, renders claim 1 or any claim dependent thereon obvious. Thus, it is requested that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 5, 8-10 and 14-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Conclusion

Having fully responded to all matters raised in the Office Action, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance, an indication for which is respectfully solicited. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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